

A
LETTER
APOLOGETI-

CALL OF GEORGE

BRISSE Lord of Desgru-

*tieres, wherein are set downe the
reasons that moued him to turne
to the Reformed.*

Brisset

WRITTEN TO MON-

sieur TOVRaine, Aduocate

in the Court of Parliament of

BRETAGNE.

A WORKE VERY PROFITA-

ble for those to reade that desire

*to know the grounds of
their Religion.*

Translated out of French.

LONDON,

Printed by G. ELD for RICHARD LEA, and are to
be sold at his shop at the North entry of the
Royall Exchange, 1616.

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By the Lord of the
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 in the Court of Parliament of

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LONDON

Printed by G. F. for Richard B. and
 be sold at his shop in the Strand near the
 Royal Exchange 1716



The Epistle to the READER.



*AS to serue GOD is the part of a Christian, so how to serue him aright is the part of a wise Christian to learne. I am de-
ceiued if this Booke doe not teach that ; and therefore cannot receiue too much applause. This superstitious age is linked in Mariage to heresie, who haue begot many impious Infants , I meane bookes both ridicu-
lous and blasphemous written by Seētaries, but especially by the Romish writers. The most grosse errors of whom this Treatise vnfolde. Thanke the Author for the Worke , Mee for the translation, and GOD for both. Farewell.*

23042

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you. I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but I have managed to find some time to write to you.

and good opinion I have ever had of you
and have been much affected with the
knowledge of your piety and devotion



I was the most zealous and devoted
Religion, I had notwithstanding the
that Religion is not to be followed
and I wish I might have been able to

SIR



Heretofore you have done
mee the honour to repure
mee a man of desert, and
have beene desirous of my
saluation, I desire that now
also you would haue mee
in the like esteeme. To the
end therefore that my al-
teration of religion im-

print in you no hard conceit of mee, I haue
thought it fit to set downe the motiues, and rea-
sons which haue induced mee to this change;
beseeching you to beleue (and my God knowes
that I lie not) that I haue not had regard to any
humane considerations, but on the contrarie
haue not harkened to the promises and promoti-
ons which the Romane Church offered vnto me;
and haue lost the friendship of many personages,
whom neuerthelesse I will not leaue to loue, and
honour, and you principally, Sir, whose vertue,
and

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and good opinion I haue euer much esteemed,
and desired. These considerations infuse a hope
into mee that you will rellish well my reasons,
which briefly, and summarily I will here set
downe.

Giue me leaue then to tell you, Sir, that when
I was the most zealously addicted to the Romane
Religion, I had notwithstanding this perswasion
that Religion is not subject to men, how great
and learned soeuer they be, but that they are sub-
ject to Religion. I also then held Religion to be
the Rule of saluation giuen by G O D to men, to
which euery man ought to be subjected, it being
not permitted to any one to exempt himselfe, or
to change, or diminish it. And thereupon en-
quiring of some of the Roman Church (whom
I reputed the most learned) where this Rule was
giuen by G O D, they answered that it was con-
tained in that booke commonly called the Bible,
and that it was peeuliar to this booke onely to be
stiled the *Word of GOD*. According to their in-
formation(hauing first inuoked G O D for increase
of knowledge) I set my selfe to reade this booke,
and hauing read intentiuely all the Gospell, I was
much astonished to finde almost nothing in it
that had beene taught me. I plainly perceiued
that it was not there commanded to inuoke the
Saints, nor to render any seruice to Images, nor
to sacrifice I E S U S C H R I S T, nor to adore the
Host, nor to pray to G O D without vnderstan-
ding: I also clearely saw that there was no men-
tion

tion made of Purgatorie, nor of Lent, nor of Masses, nor of Merits, nor of Monkes, nor of diuerse Orders of Religion, nor of the Primacy of the Roman Church. In a word, I found few things there, which I thought to be expressly commanded in the *Word of GOD*; nay quite contrary, I found many passages contradictory to those things which in former time I had learned.

Being in this Labyrinth, I thought the next way to get out was, to addresse my selfe to some of the greatest Schollers of that Religion, and to implore their aide. Which I did, and receiued this answere from them, that it was not for mee to reade the Holy Scripture, and to enquire after things which passed my capacity. Also they told mee that the Catholicke Roman Church had so ordained, to which the holy Scripture sends vs, saying that it is the pillar and the prop of Verity. *1 Tim. 3. vers. 15.* Who heares not the Church, ought to be held for a Pagan, and a Pagan. *Mat. 18.* and *IESVS CHRIST* saith to *S. Peter*, *I haue prayed that thy faith faile thee not:* which manifesteth vnto vs, that the Roman Church founded vpon Saint *Peter* cannot erre in faith.

Discoursing of these things with my selfe, I thus said to my selfe. I belecue that *IESVS CHRIST* died for mee, and that the promises contained in the word of *GOD* appertaine to mee as well as to any other of the Church. Wherefore then should I not dare to looke into these things which appertaine

pertaine vnto mee ? If I had bookes of loue or
 fables, they would not take them from mee, and
 yet they will depriue me of that booke, which
 they themselues affirme to be the word of God.
 And if (as they say) it be not to be read but by
 the learned, no man should euer read it, since
 that no man can be learned in it before hee haue
 read it. I had thought that men had read the Scrip-
 ture to become learned in Piety, and to attaine
 to that heavenly wisdom, which out-shines all
 humane wisdom as much as the Sunne a candle.
 I also assure my selfe that the Scribes and Pha-
 rises were as learned as any now aliue, and as
 conuersant in the Scriptures as any of the Ro-
 man Church, and yet wee finde that CHRIST
 being demanded by his Disciples why the
 Scribes, and Pharises vnderstood him not, an-
 swered; that to them was not giuen to know the
 secrets of the kingdome of God. Yet the Papists
 would perswade vs that a man may be learned in
 the Gospell before he read it. Why do they al-
 ledge to me passages of Scripture, since they will
 not permit mee to see whether they alledge them
 faithfully or no. I would haue them to shew mee
 the places which they cite to proue the autho-
 rity of the Roman Church. As for that passage
 where the Church is called the pillar, and the
 prop of Verity, I finde that there is no mention
 at all made of the Roman Church, no more then
 of the Greeke, or Syrian. I may adde also, that
 there is no likelyhood that the Diuine truth
 should

should be founded vpon men, it being more con-
 uenient that men should make the word of God
 their foundation. *S. Paul* by these words mea-
 neth onely that the Church is established by
 God on the earth to maintaine, and defend the
 Truth against infidels, and enemies of the Truth:
 so that these words represent to the Church her
 duty, and not her authority. So the Syrian
 Church founded by *Iesus Christ*, and his Apostles
 was a pillar of verity against the Iewes and Pa-
 gans, but this did not free it from error. The same
 may also haue happened to the Church of Rome.

As concerning the passage, which sayes, that
 hee who heares not the Church ought to be held
 as a Pagan, and a Publican; hee that reads the
 precedents, and subsequents shall soone perceiue
 that these words serue not to proue that the Ro-
 man Church, which they call Catholike (that is
 to say Vniuersall) should be iudge in deciding
 controuerfies of Religion. First, because in that
 place the Roman Church is not named. Second-
 ly, because that there it is not spoken of contro-
 uersies of religion, but of a quarrell betweene
 two brethren. Thirdly, it is euident that the Ca-
 tholike, or vniuersall Church is not there meant;
 for to take vp a quarrell betweene two brethren
 wee should in vaine expect the iudgement of the
 Church vniuersall: by the Church then in this
 place is meant the Pastors, and Conductors of
 some Church particular, endeauouring to ap-
 pease the mallice of particular men: and it is

according to the precept of GOD in his word, that he, who will not consent to what they shall decree, be put in the same ranke with Pagans, and Publicans.

The third passage is that which most offends mee; for this seemes to mee to be a hard consequence; I haue prayed that thy faith faile not, *Peter*: then the Roman Church cannot erre. By the reading of the whole passage it does appeare most manifest that CHRIST speakes not at all to the Church, nor of the Church, but that hee directes his speech onely to the person of *S. Peter*, preparing him for the temptation, into which he was shortly after to fall; that is, to deny his Sauiour. IESVS CHRIST promiseth him by these words that his faith shall not faile him in this temptation, but that hee should no sooner fall, but that the hand of GOD should raise him vp againe. Secondly, and if CHRIST should there haue meant the Church of Rome, is it possible that neither that place, nor any other passage of Scripture should mention it? Thirdly, which more is, if our faith be built vpon this supposition, to wit, that Saint *Peter* is the head of the Church vniuersall, and that hee hath made the Bishop of Rome his successour, not onely in the Bishopricke of Rome, but also in the charge of being head of the Church; and that this charge hath succeeded in a direct line without variation of doctrine, and without interruption of succession; If all this be true, I demand how the people

ple shall be assured of it; since that to know is
 many histories; and authors ancient; and mo-
 derne are to read; which are written in a tongue
 which the people vnderstands not. In this point
 also then I remaine vsatisfied. *and .book .v.*
 I must needs confesse to you also that after I had
 learned that the Roman Church held; that conse-
 cration; and Transubstantiation is not at all in
 the Masse vlesse the Priest haue intention to
 consecrate; I feared much I might at one time
 or other commit Idolatry; knowing that often-
 times the Priest hath his mind otherwise busied;
 or does not belecue himselfe that which he does;
 or is a deider; and a profane man: from whence
 it necessarily followeth; those who adore that
 which the priest listes vp; adore bread, and call it
 their creator, and their God. I fell into this per-
 plexity by reading the Gospell, where I found the
 institution of this Sacrament no way to be con-
 sidered by the Papists. First; for I found that in
 the Gospell all the assistants did communicate;
 but in the Masse ordinarily the Priest alone eats.
 Secondly, likewise euery one receiued both the
species. Saint Paul 1 Cor. 11: speaking to the peo-
 ple commands euery one to proue himselfe, and
 to drinke of this cup; but in these daies the cup
 is taken from the people. Thirdly; I saw
 CHRIST did not lift vp the Host as doe the
 Priests. Fourthly, the Apostles did not adore the
 Host, as in these times the people doe. Fifthly, in
 the whole institution of this Sacrament there is

no mention at all made of Sacrifice, nor is it commanded that **IHSVS CHRIST** be sacrificed for the living, and for the dead. Sixtly, **IHSVS CHRIST** spake in a tongue which the people vnderstood. Seuenthy, the Gospell saith that **IHSVS CHRIST** tooke bread and broke it: cleane contrary, the Roman Church affirms that the Priest does not breake bread; but the accidents of bread, to wit, the colour and roundnesse of bread, &c. Eightly, the Ghospell witnesseth that **IHSVS CHRIST** tooke bread, broke it, and gaue it: on the contrary, the Roman Church holds that the Priest giues not bread. 10. I finde also in Saint *Mat.* 26. *vers.* 29. and in Saint *Mar.* 14. *vers.* 25. that **IHSVS** dranke of the fruite of the vine, that is to say, wine; it was then wine when hee dranke it: for although two cups are mentioned, as appeares by Saint *Luke*; yet Saint *Matthew*, and Saint *Marke* speaking onely of the cup of the Sacrament cannot questionless vnderstand by the fruit of the vine the wine of a cup, of which they speake not. 11 I also finde in *S. Paul* 1 *Cor.* 10 *ve.* 16. *Eccha.* 11. *ve.* 26. that wee eate and breake bread: but the Roman Church saies that wee neither eate, nor breake bread. 12. It is apparant that Saint *Paul* expounds these words in forme of a Paraphrase, in this manner, the bread, saies hee, which wee breake is the Communion to the body of **CHRIST**.

But the Roman Church denies all this, and saies that it is not bread, and that wee breake not bread

bread, but the *species*, and apparences of bread: from whence it followeth that these apparances of bread should be the Communion to the body of CHRIST. 13. I finde also in the Acts of the Apostles that the Disciples assembled themselves to breake the bread. *Chap. 2. vers. 46.* and *Chap. 20. vers. 7.* It would seeme a thing ridiculous to the Papists if one of their religion, going to receiue the very body of CHRIST at Easter, should say that hee goes to breake bread.

14 I see that the Ghospell according to Saint *Luke Chapter. 22.* and the Apostle Saint *Paul 1 Corinthians. Chapter. 11.* informes vs how these words (*this is my body*) are to be vnderstood: for when they come to speake of the cup, in steed of (*this is my blood*) they thus expound, this cup is the New Testament in my blood. The bread then is the body of our Sauour in like manner as that which is in the cup is a Testament; which is not in substance, but in a Sacrament, As also *IESVS CHRIST* calleth it a commemoration, And as ordinarily in Scripture, signes and Sacraments take the names of that which they signifie. 15 If the Cup bee the Testament in the blood of CHRIST, as saies Saint *Luke*, it is not then the very blood of CHRIST; for it were absurd to say that the blood of CHRIST is in the blood of CHRIST.

I will further confesse vnto you that when I was at the height of my ignorance this manner of speaking

speaking (as to lift **GOD**; to carry **GOD**; and by the mouth to receive the creator) seemed to mee harsh, and grosse. Also, I could not heare without grieve some of the reformed religion to upbraid vs with our Priests making **GOD**, and that they sold **GOD** for a little mony in priuat Masses; and that if **IESVS CHRIST** be in the Hoast, he which steales away the Hoast, must necessarily steale away **IESVS CHRIST**. They also in way of mockage told vs that our greatest Doctors held that the body of **CHRIST** might be carried away by Mice, which would make any mans haire to stand an end, that hath in a deare esteeme the honour of **IESVS CHRIST**, our blessed Saniour, the eternall Sonne of **GOD**. Moreover, to affirme that **CHRIST**s body is in so many places, and that it is in euery crum of the bread, is not agreeable to the Ghospell, which giues him a body like to ours, that he might be our brother. They who alledge that his body is now glorified doe not consider that when hee made this Sacrament his body was yet infirme, and not glorified. Further, his glorification hath not changed his humane nature, but hath onely taken away the infirmities of it.

There is also another inconuenience in the Roman Church, which draue mee from it; which is, that whereas Saint *Paul* in the 10. Chap. to the Hebrewes saith that wee are sanctified onely by the death of **IESVS CHRIST**, the Romish Priests say that the Masse is the same sacrifice with that
of

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of the Crosse, and that they sacrifice Iesus
CHRIST really, and truly for our redemption.
Which I utterly dislike; for whereas at first the
Romish Priests taught me that the death of
Iesus CHRIST was the onely price of our re-
demption, now they giue me for the price of my
redemption the sacrifice of the Masse, which not-
withstanding is not the death of *Iesus Christ*. It can-
not be said that the Masse is the continuation of
the sacrifice of the Crosse; for then it should be
the continuation of the death of *Christ*, and so
CHRIST should die continually. To conclude,
they which affirme that the Masse is the sacrifice
of Iesus CHRIST, say withall that it is the ap-
plication, and commemoration of the sacrifice of
CHRIST on the crosse: from whence this con-
sequence may be deriued, that it is not the sacrifice
of Iesus CHRIST: for as the application of a
plaister, is not a plaister: or as the application of a
medicine, or a rule, is neither a medicine, nor a
rule: so the application of the sacrifice of Iesus
CHRIST is not the sacrifice of Iesus CHRIST.
The same may also be said of commemoration.

Purgatory is another cause of my separation
from the Romish Church. I learned at last that
the Popish Purgatory was built upon this tenent,
to wit, that Iesus CHRIST by his death, and
suffering hath satisfied for the punishment of
sinnes before Baptisme, but that he hath not sa-
tisfied for the punishment of sinnes committed
after Baptisme. I was very inquisitiue after this
doctrine;

doctrine; as iudging it to be a point most behoof-
full of all for a Christian to vnderstand, since that
it explaines vnto vs what CHRIST hath done for
vs. But though with all diligence I read the
Scriptures yet could I not finde there any menti-
on at all made of Purgatory. I then grew bolder,
and thus questioned some of the Romish religion.
Hath not IESVS CHRIST payed inough to de-
liuer vs from Purgatory? And if hee haue payed
inough, why does not GOD accept, and take this
payment for as much as it is worth? 2 And since
that *Christ* makes intercession for vs in heauen,
why should not the soules be rather quit of Pur-
gatory by his intercession, then by the indulgen-
ces of the Pope? 3 And if (as the Papists hold) y
none of the faithfull which shall liue at the day of
Iudgement shall goe to Purgatory, why cannot
GOD as well exempt vs, without violating his
iustice? 4 It is true, that nothing defiled shall
enter into Paradis: but Saint *John* in his 1 *Epist.*
chap. 1. saith that the blood of *Iesus Christ* doth
cleanse vs from all sinne. 5 The Roman Church
also holds that in Purgatory sinnes are not pur-
ged away but punished; it may therefore more
fitly be stiled a Tormentary, then a Purgatory.
The ordruis, and blois of our soules are not pu-
nishments, or paines, but sinnes, of which *Iesus*
Christ doth cleanse vs. 6 It is necessary that the
satisfaction of our Saviour be applied to vs: but
it is GOD that must prescribe the meanes how to
apply it, for to vs it is not permitted to inuent
them.

them. Moreouer, the meanes applied to a thing ought to be contrary to the thing, there being no medicine which is applied with poyson. In like maner the way to apply vnto our selues the remission of our debts by *Iesus Christ*, is not to make vs pay them. The meanes to apply to our selues his grace, and mercy, is not in tormenting vs in a fire. Truly the holy Scripture produceth vs examples of persons receiued into Paradise, and entered into peace, and glory, incontinently after their death; as the thiefe. *Luke. 2. 29.* Saint *Paul* *2 Timo. 4. 8.* and *Esay. 57. vers. 1.* and *2 Apocal. 14. vers. 13.* But wee finde no example of any man sent to Purgatory. 8 The onely light which hath directed vs to finde out the errour of this Purgatory is experience, which shewes vs that it is a thing meerely inuented for gaine: for no man sees particular Masses but for those that giue money: poore men must content themselves with generall prayers, in which the rich haue also a part. The Mendicant Friers neuer goe to the funerall of a poore man, and yet his soule hath cost as much, and is no lesse precious in the eye of God then an Emperours. The letters of Indulgence, and personall dispensation, which the Pope grants, is not but for persons of quality.

Another thing also much moued mee; to wit, that a man cannot be assured of his saluation; which made mee thus to reason with my selfe. Shall I any longer remaine in a religion which, after I haue made a hurde of merits, and satisfactions,

Actions, nay, haue bought the satisfactions of others) cannot assure mee after all this whether I be the childe of G O D, or of the Diuell ? what religion can this be which teacheth such distrust ? On the contrary, through the whole Scripture G O D exhorts vs to trust in him, and to come to him with a full certainty of Faith. *Heb. 10. 22.* and bids vs with boldnesse to trust in him with a lively faith in *Iesus Christ. Ephe. 3. 12.*

Consider also, Sir, with mee, that the commandements of the Roman Church are much more honoured & obserued then the commandements of G O D. 1. Because it is there taught, that the Roman Church authoriseth the holy Scriptures, that is to say, that the ordinances of men authorise the commandements of G O D. 2. To eate flesh vpon a good Friday is a greater sinne then to commit murther, or adultery ; yet is this the Friday, on which ordinarily *Christ* did eate the Paschall Lambe. 3. To blaspheme the name of G O D in this world is a small offence ; but to speake ill of the Pope (especially in Italy, and Spaine) is an vn pardonable, and a burnable offence. 4. The Iewes haue a religion which affirme *Christ* to be a coufner : but to say, that there is no other Purgatory but the blood of *Iesus Christ* is a crime deserues the Inquisition. 5. Every Bishoppe of France may giue absolution for faults committed against the law of G O D, but cannot absolue men of sinnes committed against the Pope, and his Sea. Also in the
Roman

Multitude warrants a religion. I finde that *Iesus Christ*. *Mat. 7. vers. 13* would that we enter in by the strait dore, saying that the way is large through which the multitude passeth, and leadeth to destruction. If you argue against me with signes, and miracles; I must answer you with my Saviour, that an adulterous nation demands signes; and in the 13 of Saint *Marke* hee saith that false Doctors should come, making signes, and miracles to seduce. If you seeke to convince mee with the chaire of the Pope, I answer you that the Pharises objected to *Christ* the chaire of *Moses*, and their succession, and yet were the enemies of *Iesus Christ*. Also *Iesus Christ* sends vs not to Chaires, but to his word, saying in Saint *John* 10. that his sheepe follow him, and heare his voyce. And in the 8 chapter hee sayth. If you perseuer in my word, you shall be truly my Disciples. Moreouer, at this day the Syrian, and Greeke Churches, more ancient then the Roman, vant of the like succession, and condemne the Roman Church.

If you reply that in the word of God there are difficulties, and obscure passages, I answer that I make my selfe in such things neither iudge, nor interpretor, but this I am sure that I understand inough in the Scripture to save me. And I assure you that since I turned to the true religion of *Iesus Christ*, I haue learned more in two months then I did in all my life before. I haue learned since to belieuenolonger by another mans faith.

faith. The consideration of these odious errours
 makes mee exhorte you, as you tender your sal-
 uation, to thinke of these things, and to deliuer
 your soule from this captiuitie, to the
 end that you may glorifie God on the
 earth, if you desire to be glorified in
 heauen. I beseech God that
 you may be, Sir
 and rest.

FINIS.

Your humble friend, and servant.

DESORVSTIERES,